



The Foxwhelp Mix-Up

Posted by [Todd Parlo](#)

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[Todd Parlo](#)

[The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

January 06, 2013 04:20AM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 301

We have gleaned Foxwhelps from the greater New England area for our tasting here, and they have generally been large, slightly conic, and quite flavorful with a good tartness. Most comments from attendees have referred to the good fresh eating quality, certainly not strictly cider. It is unlikely that this is the foxwhelp of Gloucestershire, England, though it is a good cider variety. If you want to add to your confusion, do some browsing in google images at the foxwhelps, and let me know if you find two alike.

I think a good way to get to the bottom of this is for growers to submit here the attributes of their foxwhelps (and certainly the same goes for other cultivars listed on the site), and disclose the original source material of the tree or scionwood. There are different strains of things out there, but there is also a lot of error in the chain of dispersal (ie- mixups and such).

There is some information on foxwhelps at suttonelms.org.uk/apple81.html which gives the tannin and brix levels so folks can compare with theirs.

Edited 2 time(s). Last edit at 01/06/2013 09:26PM by Michael Phillips.

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[David Maxwell](#)

[genotyping Foxwhelp](#)

January 06, 2013 04:39PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 197

I have a number of trees of what was claimed to be Foxwhelp, but which Claude Jolicoeur, (who is much more sophisticated than I), points out bears no relationship whatsoever to the descriptions of Foxwhelp in any reference books. Mine is a large, red blushed apple with an unimpressive flavour, minimal tannin, and moderate sugar - probably best classified as a pure sweet, if it can be considered a cider apple at all.

If we want to get really specific about this, what we really need is genotyping of a Foxwhelp which everybody (the Gloucestershiremen) agrees is true. We could then compare ours to this "gold standard". I dreamed up the idea of genotyping apples 10 or 15 years ago, when the technology was still undeveloped, and was told it was simply impossibly expensive to waste on something as trivial as apple varieties. However, last year one of the researchers at my local ag. research station planted an orchard of 1000+ varieties with the intention of genotyping each one to identify the genes responsible for each characteristic, (resistance to scab, red colour, good storage, maybe even insect resistance (which is what I am currently interested in)). The intention is then to test crossed progeny while still seedlings to determine whether the desired characteristics have been passed to the the progeny. It develops that it is now possible to genotype things for a few hundred dollars. (The original human genome project was estimated to have cost something like 2.5 million dollars ... or was it billions?)

Edited 2 time(s). Last edit at 01/06/2013 05:47PM by Michael Phillips.

[Reply Quote](#)

[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

February 02, 2013 06:11AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

Yes, I am another victim of the Foxwhelp mix-up. Actually, we usually call this apple the Fauxwhelp in the Cider Digest discussion forum. Here is a picture of mine:

[CjoliFauxwhelp.jpg](#)

This one comes from scion wood I obtained from Richard Fahey, a NAFEX member, in 1996. I think it originally comes from the Geneva collection, and that the mix-up happened when they imported many English cider apples during the 1970's. It has been said that the person who collected the scion wood actually took a branch coming from the rootstock, but I don't have a formal confirmation of this.

As of its value for cider, in my opinion, it has... none. The sugar is too low, SG below 1.045; the acidity is way too high, around 11 to 12 grams of malic acid per liter, no tannins, no flavor. Compare these numbers with Cortland that gets SG close to 1.060 (that is 30% more sugar) and acidity around 8 g/L (30% less) good flavor and tannins... Fauxwhelp might be interesting as a cooking apple, but that's about all. And there are many others that are way better for cooking. And it's not even a nice looking apple!

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Kevin Hauser](#)

[Re: The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

October 13, 2013 07:43AM

[foxwhelp.jpg](#)

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 1

I wondered about this; we harvested Foxwhelp this week after a brutally hot and unusually humid September, and it was fantastic. A bit intense, but flavorfully sweet/tart and nice "appley" overtones, not the harshness I expected. It was very crisp and moderately juicy, worthy of a much bigger rootstock than the M27 it's currently grafted on.

I had just figured that our hot climate mellowed it out from the English descriptions I had read, but now I suspect that it is indeed a different variety. Whatever it is, I like it and want more of them.

Kevin Hauser

Kuffel Creek Apple Nursery

Riverside, California

Uganda, East Africa

[Reply Quote](#)

[David M. Taylor](#)

[Re: The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

November 29, 2013 08:14PM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 1

My experience with "Foxwhelp" is like Kevin's, and the look of it resembled his. I ordered a scion from Fedco a few years ago of one they might prefer to call "Fauxwhelp". It bloomed every year since I got it (quite precocious), and it finally gave me its first apple this third year. The apple fell off the tree by itself the 1st of October. It was rock hard so I let it sweat for a couple of weeks, then dove in. Mine was very sweet and juicy, and the flavor reminded me very much of a good Fuji. It had a certain earthiness to the flavor. No tannin, none whatsoever. A very sweet delicious apple, worthy of eating as well as cider making once I get more of them. I can't wait to get more in the future! I'm sure it bears zero resemblance to the one from England, but whatever it is, this one that I got is certainly a worthwhile apple for eating and probably all uses.

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[Chad Frick](#)

[Re: The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

January 31, 2014 08:10AM

[8328_1228847874604_5932971_n.jpg](#)

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 4

I've got a 12-tree block of what I believe are proper bitter Foxwhelps out here in California and here's the pic.

They usually ripen here in mid-September and have been making some nice hard cider blends. I planted them in '07. The trees came from Trees of Antiquity nursery, whose owner tells me they've been propagating the same stock for the last 30+ years. The stock originally came from trees at Foxwhelp Farms in Healdsburg, CA.

I'm not sure what sub-category of Foxwhelp they are. From the striping it looks like they could be "Original/Old Foxwhelp?", or perhaps "Improved/Bulmer's Foxwhelp?" Going by the key in this document [www.cider.org.uk], I end up with Bulmer's Foxwhelp because some have short stems that don't extend out of the basin, no swollen stem bases noted, and russetting is (mostly) confined to the basin.

Vulture Hill Orchard

Zone 10a in California

Edited 3 time(s). Last edit at 02/18/2014 08:20AM by Chad Frick.

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[Jeb Thurow](#)

[Re: The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

April 25, 2014 08:04PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 15

I thought you all might appreciate this quote from a book I am currently reading from 1902. It is a USDA pamphlet titled "A study of Cider Making, France Germany and England" It sounds like the confusion of English Cider apples has been going on for awhile. Page 39 "Any attempt to study the cider apples of England, or table varieties for that matter, is greatly complicated by the endless maze of names of

similar orthography which have been given to apples, both cider and table varieties, and by the fact there is no recognized authority on the nomenclature of orchard fruits in the entire country. Every local community appears to delight in applying names of its own choosing to the fruits grown, and there seems to be no general disposition to reduce the nomenclature to a system under some competent authority, as for instance, a national committee on pomological nomenclature."

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

April 25, 2014 08:28PM

Yes, this is Alwood's book, very interesting...

Highly recommended reading for all interested in cider.

And easily downloaded from

[\[archive.org\]](#)

Claude

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Derek Mills](#)

[Re: The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

December 11, 2015 02:42AM

Hocking Hills Orchard

Zone 6B, SE Ohio

Registered: 8 years ago

Posts: 1

I grow just under a thousand varieties of apples and have grown what I thought was Foxwhelp, but now refer to as Fauxwhelp, since the early 1990's. The source was Greenmantle Nursery in California. The fruit tastes great, is extremely productive, large and a pinkish red but unlike other comments in this now old string <g> mine ripens around Labor Day.

I also grow a Foxwhelp which looks and tastes exactly like the Foxwhelp in Dr. Joan Morgan's great tome "The Book of Apples" which is about apples grown in the UK and the home of Foxwhelp.

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[Brittany Kordick](#)

[Re: The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

March 18, 2021 08:00PM

So we're a little late to the "fox" or "faux" mystery game . . . We unknowingly obtained the 'Fauxwhelp' (as opposed to 'Foxwhelp') scionwood over a decade ago and planted a single tree out in our original test orchard, but somehow, until this past year, never got around to assessing it amidst the annual main harvest hubbub. With high anticipation of spitter astringency we brandished our paring knives and dug into the fresh fruit, chewed thoughtfully for a spell, then looked at each other in bewilderment and declared the fruit . . . "Yum."

We assumed our Piedmont NC terroir had indeed affected the 'Foxwhelp' and it had somehow lost its bittersharp qualities in translation . . . or that people's palates are whacked out, and despite descriptions to the contrary, it just so happened that this bittersharp apple was kind of appealing for some reason. At any rate, we didn't think too much more about it besides mild wonderment and deciding we liked the apple as a fresh eater, and would try it in cider at some future point. Well, now scionwood collecting season has rolled around, and we revisited 'Foxwhelp,' deciding to graft a bunch more, but in looking up some particulars about it, we recently stumbled upon the "Out on a Limb Apples" site with its account of the 'Fauxwhelp': [www.outonalimbapples.com].

They go on to say that after many American cidemakers became suspicious about their 'Foxwhelp' apples, it was determined that there weren't any actual ones being grown in America, but that back in 2012 four different 'Foxwhelp' variations from the UK were imported and were in quarantine in Beltsville, MD. Can't seem to find any info beyond that, so writing here to see if anyone else has an update, and if it's possible to obtain actual 'Foxwhelp' scionwood now.

[Kordick Family Farm](#)

Westfield, NC

Zone 7a

[Reply Quote](#)

[David Fulton](#)

[Re: The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

July 08, 2021 04:45PM

Hey Brittany,

Registered: 3 years ago

Posts: 8

I am growing a couple of different Foxwhelps myself - in first leaf so don't know if they are true or the GRIN supplied Foxwhelp that they've started marking as Fauxwhelp in their catalog. One of my sources was the Temperate Orchard Conservancy, the other a hobbyist like myself.

There is an excellent article in a recent copy of Malus magazine (<https://www.maluszine.com/#/>) by John Bunker that i would recommend in order to get the full story - expanding beyond the brief outline on the out on a limb apples site. While it seems no one knows what happened to the MD Foxwhelps, John has come into possession of 4 strains which he has provisional approval to grow but not yet

distribute by the USDA. Hopefully when that constraint gets lifted, we'll all get the chance to grow the Red, Broxwood, Bulmer's etc strains that don't appear to be otherwise available in this country. I'm patiently waiting myself as someone with a fondness for the Forest of Dean area of Gloucestershire 🌱smiling smiley

USDA 5b, Blue Hill, ME

600+ trees on MM111/G890 (100+ UK cider varieties in 1st to 3rd leaf)

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[David Fulton](#)

[Re: The Foxwhelp Mix-Up](#)

June 12, 2022 02:53AM

Registered: 3 years ago

Posts: 8

Necro'ing an old post, but I did get scionwood for Broxwood Foxwhelp from John Bunker this spring. Looks like it took well - i have 4 or 5 grafts that look like they took. I made a promise to John to propagate and share. I'll be sending scions to the Temperate Orchard Conservancy this winter. If you'd like to receive scionwood direct, reach out to me EOY.

USDA 5b, Blue Hill, ME

600+ trees on MM111/G890 (100+ UK cider varieties in 1st to 3rd leaf)

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